

REMARKS

Claims 28-33 are presented for examination, and are in independent form.

Claims 1-27 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein, and new Claims 28-33 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,668,640 to Nozawa et al.

Cancellation of Claims 1-27 renders their rejections moot. Applicants submit that new independent Claims 28-33 are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

Claim 28 is directed to a communication apparatus for performing a ring type multi-address transmission by transferring received data to a next station. A receiving unit receives data sent by a multi-address transmission, a storing unit stores the received data, and a printing unit prints the stored data. A transferring unit transfers the received data to the next station, and an instruction unit issues an instruction to execute a ring type multi-address transmission. When the instruction is issued by the instruction unit, the transferring unit transfers the received data to the next station, after the received data is stored into the storing unit and is printed by the printing unit according to a manual instruction of an operator. Before the received data is transferred to the next station without having been printed, information, which indicates a recommendation of printing of the received data before the received data is transferred to the next station, is notified to the operator.

Among other notable features of the communication apparatus of Claim 28 is that in ring type multi-address transmission, received data is transferred to a next station after it is printed, whereby it is ensured that an operator confirms the received data. Further, it can be notified to the operator that printing of the received data, before the received data is transferred to the next station, is necessary. (See, e.g., Fig. 6, step S48, of the present application and the corresponding description thereof.)¹ By virtue of the features of Claim 1, the communication apparatus can avoid the problem in which an operator transfers received data to a next station without printing the received data or confirming the contents of the data. That is, it can be recommended to the operator that transfer of the received data to the next station should be executed with confirmation of the received data.

Nozawa et al., as understood by Applicant, discusses facsimile equipment in which data received in ring type multi-address transmission is printed (step S2204 of Fig. 7B), and is specified by a user from the received data (steps S2102 and S2103 of Fig. 7A), transfer of the data is instructed (YES in step S2400 of Fig. 7B), and data transfer is conducted. Also, a confirmation key (622 of Fig. 5) is apparently used to input the contents of one of the functions or one of the received data selected (see column 8, lines 6-9).

Even if Nozawa et al. be deemed to discuss that when data is received in the ring type multi-address transmission, the presence/absence of the reception is notified,

¹ It is of course to be understood that the references to various portions of the present application are by way of illustration and example only, and that the claims are not limited by the details shown in the portions referred to.

nothing in Nozawa et al. teaches or suggests the feature of Claim 28 in which before the received data is transferred to the next station without having been printed, information, which indicates a recommendation of printing of the received data before the received data is transferred to a next station, is notified to an operator.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that Claim 28 is clearly allowable over Nozawa et al.

Independent Claims 30 and 32 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 28, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 28.

Claim 29 is directed to a communication apparatus for performing a ring type multi-address transmission by transferring received data to a next station. A receiving unit receives data sent by a multi-address transmission, a displaying unit displays a presence or absence of received data, and a storing unit stores the received data. A printing unit is adapted to print data, a transferring unit transfers the received data to the next station, and an instruction unit issues an instruction to transfer the received data to the next station. When the receiving unit receives data, the displaying unit displays the presence of the received data. When the instruction is issued by the instruction unit, the transferring unit transfers the received data to the next station. When the instruction has not been issued by the instruction unit within a predetermined period of time, the transferring unit forcibly transfers the received data to the next station and the printing unit prints the received data and information that indicates the received data has been forcibly transferred to the next station.

Among other notable features of the communication apparatus of Claim 29 is that in ring type multi-address transmission, received data is transferred to a next station when an instruction is issued (e.g., from an operator), and when the instruction has not been issued within a predetermined period of time, the received data is forcibly transferred to the next station, and the printing unit prints the received data and information that indicates the received data has been forcibly transferred to the next station. (See, e.g., Fig. 16, step S170, of the present application and the corresponding description thereof.)

By virtue of the features of Claim 29, if the operator is present, the received data can be transferred to the next station by the operator's instruction, and even if the operator is absent, e.g. for a lengthy period of time, and doesn't issue an instruction to transfer, the ring type multi-address transmission can continue without disconnection of the communication ring, and the operator can confirm the contents of the received data and the fact of reception of data in the ring type multi-address transmission, immediately upon returning.

Even if Nozawa et al. be deemed to discuss that data received in ring type multi-address transmission is automatically transferred to a next station, and the received data is transferred to the next station by an instruction to transfer from an operator, nothing in Nozawa et al. teaches or suggests the features of Claim 29 in which in ring type multi-address transmission, received data is transferred to a next station when an instruction is issued, and if an instruction to transfer has not been issued within a predetermined period of time, received data is forcibly transferred to a next station, and the received data and information that indicates the received data has been forcibly transferred to the next station

are printed.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that Claim 29 is clearly allowable over Nozawa et al.

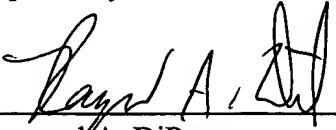
Independent Claims 31 and 33 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 29, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 29.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raymond A. DiPerna", is written over a horizontal line.

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